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**HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD  
STAFF REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION**

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Landmark/District: **Capitol Hill Historic District**  
Address: **921 G Street, SE**

Meeting Date: **January 28, 2021**  
Case Number: **21-132**  
ANC: **6B**

☒ Agenda  
☐ Consent  
☒ Concept  
☒ Alteration  
☐ New Construction  
☐ Demolition  
☐ Subdivision

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Owner Michael Siemer, with plans prepared by KUBE Architecture, seeks concept review for a three-story rear addition and one-story partial rooftop addition to a contributing building located within the Capitol Hill Historic District.

**Property Description**

921 G Street, SE is one of four two-story frame rowhouses constructed in 1872 by Joseph Walsh. The four buildings have a continuous cornice and all four rowhouses retain their rear ell (“dogleg”). Currently there are no rooftop additions along this side of the block. All other buildings on this stretch of G Street are two-story, with little variety in height.



*921 G St SE – front elevation*

## Proposal

The plans call for the construction of a rear and rooftop addition. A new full-width three-story rear addition would be constructed extending approximately 16 feet towards the rear property line. The rear addition would be clad in siding, charred wood siding, and Hardie panels. There would be large window openings on the second and third stories, with French doors at the first story.

Additionally, the plans show the construction of a one-story rooftop addition. The addition would be set back just over 18 feet from the front elevation and would start at seven-foot height and then slope up to nine feet in height at a 26-foot setback. The roof addition would be clad in siding and have two short paired windows at the top of its front elevation.



*Views of the lumber mock-up for the rooftop addition from the front and rear*

## Evaluation

The drawings show total demolition of interior walls, stairs, fireplaces, and other features, so it is important that floor assemblies be fully retained and repaired for the project to not result in substantial demolition as defined in the Board's regulations.

The lumber mock-up shows that the roof addition would be visible from G Street. The mock-up, along with a rendering from the architect, also show that the rear addition would be visible from 10<sup>th</sup> Street and the rear alley.

Most rear ell wings on this block and all on this four-building row are intact. The Board has in some instances approved full-width rear additions on blocks where there is variety, but there has not always been consistent guidance on weighing block composition versus row integrity. Because this is a small row, and some ells on the block appear to have been previously infilled, HPO staff finds that a full-width rear addition would be compatible.

However, there is consistency with buildings along this section of G Street all having rear additions either at the same two-story height or lower. All rear ells in this four-building row are

visible from 10<sup>th</sup> Street in addition to the alley. The Board has approved visible rear additions that are compatible with traditional ways of adding to historic buildings in the historic district. However, the Board has not generally supported rooftop additions with such high visibility, particularly when they can be seen from street view over the front of the building.

Based on the context of this property, it is recommended that a two-story full-width rear addition no taller than the height of the existing house be found compatible but that a third story roof addition be found incompatible.

**Recommendation**

*The HPO recommends that the Board not find the concept to be compatible with the historic district.*

*Staff contact: Moira Nadal*